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POLICY

UNITED NATIONS TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES

Cooperation between the United Nations Development Programme and the Department for Technical Cooperation for Development

Report of the Administrator

SUMMARY

As requested by the Governing Council in its decision 90/37 of 20 June 1990, the Administrator is reporting on the results of efforts of the United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development of the United Nations Secretariat to establish a more effective division of labour and a more effective complementary relationship and to devise ways and means of eliminating duplicative administrative support activities and strengthening of technical support activities.

Discussions and consultations have been undertaken to this end. Some recent progress has been made, including agreement between the United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development for the Department to work more closely with the Office for Project Services. This is a first step that will lead to closer coordination of activities on a broader front, to be pursued hereafter in a more systematic manner. The Administrator will, in close collaboration with the Department, review the draft guidelines for collaboration between the two organizations with a view to implementing its provisions.

1. In paragraph 10 of its decision 90/37 of 20 June 1990, the Governing Council requested the Administrator to report on the results of efforts of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development of the United Nations (DTCD) to establish a more effective division of labour and a more effective complementary relationship and to devise ways and means of eliminating duplicative administrative support activities and strengthening of technical support activities.

2. Cooperation between UNDP and DTCD, with a view to avoiding duplication of effort between the Department and the Office for Project Services (OPS) and better reciprocal utilization of capacities, has been an issue of concern for a number of years. In 1984, on the basis of recommendations of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on the Office for Project Execution (OPE) (as it was then known), the Secretary-General invited the Administrator of UNDP and the Under-Secretary-General of DTCD to establish a joint task force to take advantage of the potential for matching the OPE approach to project execution to the knowledge and services of the specialized technical departments of the United Nations.

3. As a result of the work of the joint task force, draft guidelines were proposed to serve as a basis for future closer collaboration between OPS and DTCD. This was brought to the attention of the Governing Council by the Secretary-General in paragraph 21 of the report of the Secretary-General on United Nations technical cooperation activities (DP/1987/45). Although the guidelines were never finalized and agreed to, there has been some cooperation through the use of the technical capabilities of DTCD in OPS-executed projects. OPS is increasingly working with specialized agencies of the United Nations system by involving them as associated agencies in the execution of projects. This trend is expected to continue in the future.

4. Consultation has recently taken place between UNDP and DTCD to the effect that DTCD should participate as an observer in meetings of the OPS Project Acceptance Committee (OPS PAC). The purpose of this arrangement is to strengthen DTCD cooperation with OPS since the PAC reviews all projects for which OPS execution is sought. The PAC decides on the implementation feasibility of a project as well as the need and source of technical inputs. This involvement of DTCD in PACs aims to strengthen familiarization and linkages between the Department and OPS. It will enable DTCD to bring to bear its technical expertise at the time OPS is deliberating arrangements for implementing new projects and to facilitate greater involvement of DTCD as an associated agency in OPS-executed projects. At the same time, through increased understanding of OPS capacities and procedures, the Department may well call in OPS when additional management and/or logistical support is needed in DTCD-executed projects.

5. The Administrator sets considerable store on this development and considers it an important step in furthering closer working relationships between UNDP and DTCD in general. As agreed in preliminary consultations, UNDP-DTCD relations must be viewed in a broader context than simply cooperation between OPS and the Department. Therefore, this closer working

cooperation must be viewed as a first step only. It is an important first step, however, because from it could evolve a number of initiatives that would address the various issues of relationship emphasized from the DTCD side, and because it brings DTCD much closer to UNDP operations at headquarters than previously.

6. Since OPS often executes support projects for round-table meetings and national technical cooperation assessments and programmes (NaTCAPs) as well as Management Development Programme (MDP) projects, the cooperation mentioned above is likely to lead to greater utilization of DTCD's technical capability in these processes. Similarly, projects executed by OPS for which DTCD has technical expertise will certainly benefit from an arrangement where DTCD is actively involved in the process of acceptance of projects by OPS. Greater rationalization in eliminating duplication in the project administrative support capacities of UNDP OPS and DTCD is also intended.

7. NaTCAPs and round-table meetings are government exercises in which UNDP plays an important support role as part of its major responsibility in aid coordination. In this context, the numerous UNDP-funded, DTCD-executed projects (and those in which DTCD is the cooperating agency) in areas of sectoral and national planning, public administration, and aid coordination can, as appropriate, assist the Governments in these NaTCAP processes. For example, an aid coordination project in Guinea-Bissau is also an important aspect of the NaTCAP process, as is the administrative reform project in Guinea; both of these projects are implemented by DTCD.

8. DTCD has contributed significantly to the preparation of documentation for a number of round-table meetings and to related sectoral consultations. For example, DTCD experts in Angola, Equatorial Guinea and Gambia made substantial contributions to the preparation of documentation for round-table meetings. DTCD and UNDP have also been involved in exchanges of views on substantive issues in economic planning, aid coordination, and technical cooperation. A DTCD adviser provided a background paper and was a resource person for a training seminar on the management of technical cooperation and NaTCAPs. This cooperation, which already exists, will be pursued further and will need to be institutionalized.

9. Management Development Programme. DTCD has strong capability and wide experiences in this area. Of the 32 MDP projects so far approved, 7 (or 22 per cent) are executed by DTCD and 12 (37 per cent) are executed by OPS. The participation of DTCD in the OPS Project Acceptance Committee will encourage further involvement of DTCD in projects that are directly executed by UNDP. DTCD has already been asked to be an associated agency on two of the OPS-executed projects, providing specific project inputs.

10. The scope for this kind of collaboration is considerable. MDP should increasingly involve DTCD at the project formulation and preparation stage, bearing in mind its expertise and sizeable UNDP-funded programmes in relevant sectors. As examples of current cooperation, comments are being sought from DTCD on new MDP proposals: DTCD is being asked to take part in project

launching workshops and other workshops and MDP is planning joint research activities with DTCD in areas such as decentralization and programme development.

11. The rationalization of the administrative support activities of DTCD and OPS has started to receive attention in discussions between the two organizations. Through closer cooperation between OPS and DTCD, mutually acceptable organizational arrangements, which would enable the sharing of capacities and produce benefits from cooperative advantages, will be explored.

12. The draft guidelines for collaboration between UNDP and DTCD resulting from the deliberations of the joint task force in 1985 will be reviewed in the light of the above discussions since many aspects of the guidelines relate to the rationalization of administrative support activities.

13. Through closer collaboration and better understanding of each other's strengths, greater sharing and rationalization should result for programme support services, including computerized rosters of experts, procurement and fellowship placement on projects executed by OPS and DTCD. Cooperation activities such as these will be explored.

14. The Administrator is fully committed to pursuing the course of action outlined in the above paragraphs.